

angles

WOMEN WORKING IN FILM & VIDEO

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TAAL ROSELLINI

Women behind the lens

Camera work is really not glamorous, at least initially. It's a lot of hard physical work. To succeed takes training, experience, tenacity, willingness to stick things out.—MICHELLE CRENSHAW ♦♦ Whenever I found another technical woman, it was a cause for celebration, to be able to talk over the problems, fears and successes we had in common.—LIZ BAILEY ♦♦ How many female directors of photography are there in each union? How many are working? How many in the American Society of Cinematographers as full members?—ESTELLE KIRSH

We're back

Thanks for the contributions, renewals and new subscriptions that have enabled us to keep publishing. During the hiatus, *Angles, Inc.* was formed and received tax-exempt status. We also planned several exciting issues for this year. The support of our readers reinforces that there is a demand and need for the kind of information *Angles* is providing. It's one of the only places where work by women — especially in alternative and independent media — is documented and discussed. Geoffrey Gilmore, director of programming for the Sundance Film Festival, inadvertently emphasized this point recently when he told the *New York Times* that the reason the festival, which is known for featuring independent work, was not as diverse as it had been in former years was the lack of strong work by women and African Americans.

You have to ask: What was the programming committee's criteria and how were films solicited? For example, was the committee looking at alternative work? Was it looking at work outside the feature-length mold?

You may not find ground-breaking, irreverent, provocative work by women in Utah. But you'll continue to find it through organizations such as Women in the Director's Chair. It's taking three strong programs of films and videos from its 1994 festival, one of the few featuring work by women only, around the country to show at universities, media centers and libraries. Ask about WIDC's 1995 program after this year's festival, March 9-12 in Chicago. Women Make Movies and other distributors specialize in putting together packages of diverse work by women for classroom and exhibition. And in this issue, two of our contributors write about organizing screening groups in their communities and homes. If we want to see more work by women, we have to figure out how to show it in our own communities and support those organizations that do.

Angles is supported primarily by subscriptions and contributions. You can help us with our subscription drive by making copies of the form on page 9 and asking colleagues, libraries, high schools, women's groups, community centers, art organizations and centers and universities to subscribe. If you know potential advertisers, please let us know. Contributions are welcome.

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ELFRIEDA M. ABBE

Associate Editor

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Regional Editors: *Jill Petzall, St. Louis; Harriet Robbins, Los Angeles.*
Copy editor: *Dan Sargeant.*
Contributors: *Alexis Krasilovsky, India Court MacWeeney, Erika Milvy and, Suzanne Warren,*
Cover design: *Jane Kreamsreiter.* **Advisory Board:** *Loran Johnson; Jeanne Kracher, Women in the Director's Chair; Portia Cobb, filmmaker and Community Media Project; Jackie Tshaka, Black Programming Consortium.*

Angles recognizes the innovative and important contributions women have made and continue to make in the field of film and video. We are committed to bringing readers information and news about the diverse body of work being created by women from all ethnic, cultural and socio/economic backgrounds.

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Cover: Camerawoman Alexis Krasilovsky and her son in a scene from her film "Epicenter U."

Media Activism

Who owns the airwaves? Should anyone? What are the ethics of such elemental proprietorship? And who can afford to pay for it?" These were questions asked by Linda Yablonskaya in a High Performance article about Deep Dish TV, the "world's first public access satellite network." It brings the views of the disenfranchised to the airwaves.

For example, a recent Deep Dish program was Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired, about the national health care crisis, which examined issues from diverse perspectives.

One of the segments on the show, Treating Prisoners: Health Care Behind Bars, was produced by Women in the Director's Chair, a Chicago-based membership organization committed to presenting films and videos produced or directed by women, reflecting diverse cultures and experiences. WIDC has worked in collaboration with a number of community groups to help develop larger audiences, initiate and participate in cross-cultural dialogues and share resources. It also sponsors a media program for prisoners, an annual film and video festival and a tour of works from the festival.

The collaborative effort between Deep Dish and local groups such as WIDC is at the heart of grassroots media. Angles asked media experts Cynthia Lopez, programming director of Deep Dish, and Jeanne Kracher, executive director of WIDC, to comment on this kind of media activism, its implications and importance.

What is media activism?

For me media activism means different communities attempting to redefine their own images, using media (television, film, print) and fighting for the right to do that. Part of what we try to do at Deep Dish is give different types of groups the opportunity to put forth a better representation of themselves. — Cynthia Lopez

There are many levels of this kind of activity. It could mean shooting a video or film, showing and talking about it, making sure people have access to it. I think of activism as some sort of active process of creation, exhibition or distribution with the idea of organizing or educating. The whole idea of media activism has come together for me at Women in the Director's Chair through our outreach programs, particularly our prison program. We have been working with groups of women prisoners at several federal penitentiaries who have initiated peer-run HIV/AIDS programs. In turn this work made me understand a lot more about the lives of prisoners. It led WIDC to make the tape *Mistreating Prisoners: Health Care Behind Bars* for Deep Dish. — Jeanne Kracher

Who are media activists?

Years ago people who had access to technology in terms of small film cameras were part of an elite. They documented their everyday lives and special events. As we've seen the prices of technology drop, more people have had the opportunity to do such things.

You have people who have their own video camera, and who document things in their community. You have people involved in workshops at public access stations. They learn about the editing process. Once you see the editing process, understand it and do it, you realize how media is constructed. Then you don't accept that the [mainstream] media is unbiased. — C.L.

What kind of work is being done?

I see a wide range of work. It's a great time in some ways because we've had a lot of really great examples like Marlon Riggs. He not only produced work that was challenging in form and content but wrote about it and encouraged people to do lots of different things with media.

Channel Zero is doing interesting work in a certain way. It's a collective of young people of color from New York. It's much more open and less didactic than a lot of activist work has been. One of their works was *The Nation Erupts*, about the Rodney King riots. They have a real hip hop style, almost like the music. *Women of Pilsen* by Maria Benfield is a fabulous tape. It's women from the Hispanic community telling their stories and it really gives you a chance to pay attention. — J.K.

How important is the process?

An important area of media activism is collective work. Work that doesn't come out of one person's experience but a group of people. It's less about the star and more about a collective vision. Then it's part of a political process. — J.K.

Many people equate alternative media with unprofessional media. That is my biggest point of frustration. Just because we have chosen to be alternative, not to be mainstream, doesn't mean we are not professional or that we shouldn't be taken seriously. It's not about being professional. It's about choosing an alternative vehicle. Deep Dish has been able to show people they can make television. We say, "Don't watch TV, make it. — C.L.

What effect does advanced technology, such as the information super highway, have?

People talk about the super highway the way people talked about cable or satellite dishes as kind of a panacea

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A frank 'Dialogue' on mental illness

BY SUZANNE WARREN

In 1963, director Allie Light, a housewife and young mother, committed herself to a psychiatric day ward. Her story, and the stories of six other women who have experienced madness of some sort or another, form the narrative thread which weaves *Dialogues with Madwomen* together. The women, who include an artist, a musician, and an ex-communist political activist, are a lively and articulate bunch. Collectively, they have experienced physical abuse, incest, racial violence, homophobia, and rape — according to current statistics, increasingly common aspects of female experience.

Light's interpretation of not just the causes, but the definition and treatment of madness, is explicitly feminist. After she was released from the hospital, Light's psychiatrist assigned her a series of tasks. The first weekend, she was to bake a turkey. When Light expressed her desire to attend film school, her doctor dismissed her ambitions as unhealthy. For Light and others she interviews, particularly a lesbian who is advised to start sleeping with men, rejecting the psychiatric establishment's definition of mental health is the first step toward sanity.

A more subtle feminist statement is Light's decision to include herself as a subject in her film, rather than merely alluding to her experiences or not men

tioning them at all. This simple gesture of solidarity sets the tone for the rest of the film. So much of what's right about *Dialogues with Madwomen* — its intimacy and its respect for its subjects — stems directly from Light's nervy choice. Besides revealing as much about herself as she asks of her subjects, Light requires us to see Deedee, Hannah, Karen, Mairi, Susan, Rachel and herself as human. These women are not *the other*. We identify with their struggles, their demons, their dreams.

Dialogues with Madwomen is structured around a series of talking-head interviews. Chiefly because its interview subjects are so engaging, the film is able to sustain our interest over a full 90 minutes, no easy feat for a documentary. Skillful editing and Light's remarkable rapport with her subjects are also key to the film's success.

Light has wisely chosen to expand the cinematic space with staged fantasy sequences illustrating each woman's interior life. For example, Hannah, who exudes a larger-than-life exuberance, waltzes about and tosses basketfuls of brilliantly colored confetti. Although Light's efforts are not uniformly effective — some sequences are not as unexpected or as nimbly executed as I would like — the gesture feels singularly appropriate.

As Light comments, "Everything transcends what the reality of it is.



Allie Light (top) tells her story and others in her film "Dialogues With Madwomen."

You either learn about metaphors or go mad."

Reprinted with permission of Philadelphia City Paper. Suzanne Warren is a freelance film curator and writer based in Philadelphia. *Dialogues With Madwomen* is distributed by *Women Make Movies*, 462 Broadway, Suite 500, New

York, NY 10013. 212/925-0606. Fax: 212/925-2052.

Other films by Allie Light and Irving Saraf include *Mitsuye* and *Nellie*, *Asian American Poets*. For more information: *Light-Saraf Films*, 264 Arbor St., San Francisco, CA 94131. Phone/fax: 415/469-0139.

Allie Light tells all

The director's psychiatric treatment inspired a courageous film

BY ERIKA MILVY

Most people take little notice of the question on the driver's license application that asks: Have you ever been in a mental hospital? When Allie Light checked "yes" and was subsequently denied a license, the experience jump-started emotions that would consume her professional as well as her personal future.

"Never tell," her doctor counseled when shown the letter of rejection in 1964. "Until they change the laws, never tell."

Light, an award-winning documentary filmmaker, did just the opposite. She made *Dialogues With Madwomen*, a dramatic documentary about her experience with mental illness and the experiences of six other women. "This film," said Light, "is a response to that 'never tell.'"

Light and husband/producer Irving Saraf won an Oscar for Best Documentary for their film *In the Shadows of the Stars*, about the starry eyed choristers at the San Francisco Opera. Yet the award actually hampered their efforts to raise money for the new project as everyone assumed they had pockets of cash. So Light sent a letter to each and every woman she knew asking for \$25 to make the movie. She "came out" about her psychological history and promised to make a film that would tell the truth.

Dialogues With Madwomen won the Freedom of Expression award at the Sundance Film Festival and the Grand Jury Prize at the Atlanta Film Festival. It has moved audiences in Europe and at home, many of whom line up to tell Light about their own experiences with madness.

Light describes her brief bout with clinical depression as a symptom of a pre-feminist climate that could drive any woman bonkers. Light said she watched as her husband in the 1960s marched off for a new adventure everyday while she stayed at home. "I thought my life was over," said Light who checked herself into a mental institution at age 28. Now it seems tragically funny that her psychiatrist gauged Light's recovery on her ability and enthusiasm to roast a turkey.

After nearly 20 years of filmmaking, the director finally experienced the nakedness one feels in front of the camera. "I think that's why women were able to trust me because they knew that I was doing it myself," said Light. "It keeps me from feeling like a voyeur."

In *Dialogues*, Light interviews a disparate array of women who have all suffered from some form of mental illness. While their stories vary, the women shared feelings of isolation and self-blame that Light

hopes this film will combat. In an endearing series of interviews, Hannah, a manic depressive, articulates the inner misworkings of her mind. Hannah describes her illness as being tuned into several radio stations at once, unable to shut off the sound. During a euphoric, manic stage, she literally bought out an entire flower store.

Other women's tales are more disturbing. Remarking that she did not set out to make a film on sexual molestation and child abuse, Light acknowledges that it became a recurring thread. One subject, Mairi, dealt with the trauma of incest and abuse by splitting into multiple personalities. Deedee mutilated herself after construing in Catholic school that martyrdom and self-mutilation were deemed good.

Light the interviewer always asked her subjects not just what happened to them but why they think it happened.

"I asked them to give us an analysis of what's going on and everyone rose to the occasion. The women are all quite lucid and full of insight into their illnesses," said Light. "I wanted to make a film that shows that women can think as well as feel. When you turn on Oprah, you get a sound bite and it's always an emotional one, but you never get a chance to know how the women dealt with

their problems or what (they) thought about them."

Light's other concern was to steer clear from the standard talking heads documentary style. *Dialogues* is unique for the extent to which it includes re-enactments and dramatizations. While some of the subjects actually re-enact events that occurred, Light also uses archival footage to represent the women's experiences. Female patients are shown roaming a hospital ward liked caged tigers.

"These are nameless and faceless women who lived 40 or 50 years ago who suffered a lot," said Light of the footage. "And in some way the film gives them a face and a name. They were used as stand-ins for ourselves." Other images are used as "emotional equivalents." Such scenes conjure a mood or a feeling that the subjects have expressed.

The film's closing follows one woman as she walks, suitcase in hand, into the ocean. For Light, it is an affirmative image. The woman is embarking on a mysterious adventure, one Light, the 1960s housewife, would have longed to go on.

Erika Milvy is a freelancer based in San Francisco. Her work has appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle, Elle and Vanity Fair.

Want to see more work by independents?

A teacher and student offer some suggestions

Seeking feminist works

BY JILL PETZALL

On the first Thursday evening of each month, I join a group of about 12 women for coffee in my kitchen. After talking briefly about the day's events, we turn to the VCR to watch independent films and videos that we probably will never see at our local theaters. Informally, we call ourselves Women Who Watch Movies, a consciousness-raising group for the '90s.

Our group grew out of a desire to see feminist work and to use it for exploring what it means to be a woman in our culture and other cultures. The group consists of several college teachers, who cover a wide range of subjects—philosophy, women's studies, media criticism, film and feminism and French literature. We have psychotherapists and lawyers specializing in women's issues. A few of us are filmmakers. One of our members creates environments with flowers. Several in the group are writers, whose work ranges from poetry to advertising and public relations copy to academic papers and screenplays.

Getting a group like this together is a matter of organization. First we had to agree on a regular night we could all meet. That turned out to be a lot easier than we expected. We chose Thursday nights with Monday as an alternative. Someone volunteered to make phone calls whenever necessary to keep everyone posted. Another member opened a checking account to manage our monthly contributions—\$5 each—for video rentals.

So just what is it that we're all watching? What is this multifaceted thing called a "feminist film?" Far from being mainstream entertainment, these works delight us because they push us to re-evaluate our lives. They concern a wide range of issues—the beauty myth we seem to tolerate, the female genital mutilation that continues around the world, the mistreatment of women in prisons, and homophobia that rages in our back yards. Through these works we become acutely aware of women's issues from different perspectives that challenge our assumptions and unwitting prejudices and provincialism.

We look for films with people speaking for themselves in their own voices. Instead of lamenting how women are caricatured in commercial film and video, we are trying to select depictions of women that ratify the complexities (not the simplemindedness) of the human condition. We choose films that explore the disorderly



Films such as Camille Billops' "Finding Christa," about a mother's decision to give her daughter up for adoption, challenge assumptions.

facets of human life—the quirks, the passions, the ambivalence—with disarming authenticity.

From Canadian Donna Read's *The Burning Times*, to Tami Gold's *Juggling Gender*, to Debbie Zimmerman's *Why Women Stay*, the works we've watched concern the way women relate to the world around them, to men, to each other, to friends, lovers, mothers and daughters.

For the most part, we find no unequivocal bad guys in feminist films—nor are there uncomplicated good guys. In this respect, the common denominator is the presentation of whole people, as in Camille Billops' *Finding Christa*, or Wendy Rowland's short film, *On Her Baldness*. These films capture the emotional ambiguities of women in the process of their lives rather than conforming to a predicted norm.

We will be watching works such as *Parole*, Diane Bonder's poetic treatment of a lesbian who kills her lover, which examines how sexuality is constructed by the discourses of psychology and medicine; Estela Bravo's *Miami-Havana*, a video documentary about the disrupted families of Cubans living in Miami as a result of tragic U.S./Cuban political policies; and Joan Jubel's refreshing documentary *Homoteens*. We look for work that transforms stereotypes. These films are becoming our models for understanding the complexity of our world. They broaden our standards as they raise them.

"Watching these, I have to be attentive in a different way," said one woman in our group. "I have to be attentive to characters, to visual representation and the complex flow of multidimensional visual impact—as opposed

A forum for new work

BY INDIA COURT MACWEENEY

When I moved from New York City to Madison, Wisconsin to finish my education, I found support and recognition for my work through a local media arts group, the Independent Film and Video Collaborative.

When I heard about the group, I immediately joined and became active in organizing screenings. Last year, I served as president. IFVC is a grassroots organization, comprised of about 25 students and media artists from the community. Members pay \$10 annual dues to help support activities. The group was formed five years ago with the idea of exhibiting, producing and promoting independent media art that is innovative in form and content. The organization is associated with the University of Wisconsin, which provides a space for screenings and equipment for production.

Working with IFVC is empowering. It gives the undiscovered film and video makers a forum as well as bringing a variety of new work to the city.

The group has about five screenings a year that include selected local works, works by visiting artists and works by members only. There is at least one open screening. With the exception of the visiting artists, each program includes about 10 works. Past visiting art-

ists include experimental animator Larry Jordan from California and narrative filmmaker Nietzsche Keene from Florida.

One of the most satisfying aspects of working with the collective was the support we received from the Madison community. Last year, one of the IFVC screenings of members' works was co-sponsored by the Madison Arts Center. Another members program was co-sponsored by the Starlight Cinema, a student-run film series which features avant garde film and video.

In addition to screenings, IFVC members collaborate on projects and help each other with productions.

The support that a group such as IFVC provides for media makers is important. It gives us an opportunity to network, to see new work, to produce work and to crew on a variety of projects. More importantly, it is an opportunity to show and see local work. Seeing work by others is motivating and inspires us to create our own films and videos.

New Yorker India Court MacWeeney, a senior in the film department at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, will be looking for a job in the media arts when she graduates in May. For more information about the IFVC in Madison, call Rob Matsushita, 608/259-9477.

to the dry, discursive, argumentative writing of an academic. I'm stretching my wings."

Where do we find these films and videos? Film festivals, such as the one held by Women in the Director's Chair in Chicago, feature an impressive array of diverse work in terms of cultural, technical and political priorities. The WIDC program book is a rich source of information about a wide range of films. Catalogues from distributors such as Women Make Movies or Filmmaker's Library are also inviting resources. Some distributors will consider a reduced rental rate for previewing films and videos that you are considering for classroom rentals or purchase. The all too few film and video libraries, such as the Video Data Bank in Chicago, provide catalogues and screening rooms for viewing many classics as well as new works.

Women in other parts of the country have started similar groups. Feminist films series are also springing up, mostly in university cities, alongside gay and lesbian film festivals.

Suzanne Warren, who is the founder and director of a feminist film series through the Community Education Center in Philadelphia, told me she was compelled to start her project because, "I've always had an interest in film, in feminism and in activism. There's always room for a broad spectrum of feminist work and no matter how overtly it is

expressed—from the radical to the subtle—there's always someone who doesn't like what I am showing. I simply try to explore and affirm many women's experiences," said Warren.

The women in the St Louis group have been diverse in their responses to the work we see. And yet, in spite of the formal and cultural differences among the films we watch, and our own varied racial and economic backgrounds and sexual orientations, there is one lingering consistency in our reactions.

We are viewing unique work that jars us and makes us confront our biases. It's work that haunts and at times, makes us angry. But most of all, as these Thursday nights become a fixture in our lives, the accrued experience of these new ways of seeing is leading us to become accustomed to expect nothing less—from the media or from ourselves.

While we benefit greatly from the screenings, we hope our meetings indirectly benefit the artists since we often show these works in our classrooms or recommend them for screenings and festivals at universities, schools or libraries.

Contributing editor Jill Petzall is a media maker, teacher and author based in St. Louis.

'Bhaji' a lark in Blackpool

BY HARRIET ROBBINS

Gurinda Chadha's parents emigrated from Kenya to Great Britain when the filmmaker was 3 years old. The Indian family left behind a comfortable lifestyle and profitable business when they settled in Southall, West London. The area became a haven for immigrants who established a new community while keeping their culture intact. Growing up in this neighborhood gave Chadha a sense of family and security. At the same time, she had the advantage of a bilingual, bicultural education.

"I feel it is very important for people to have their roots intact where they live. When I was growing up, I was part of a multi-cultural community. All of us had similar backgrounds. I never felt isolated from the society I lived in. I just did what I had to do in school and in other areas. I forged ahead with my life and dreams," said the filmmaker, who worked as a reporter for the BBC and a researcher for Channel Four.

"I felt very secure in my environment because I was surrounded by young people who were mostly second generation and had absorbed the lifestyles of England as well as that of their parents."

Chadha's comedy *Bhaji on the Beach* reflects her upbringing and the conflicts between the Indian and British cultures that are part of her life. The word *bhaji* refers to a type of snack food similar to vegetable tempura. This hybrid of the Indian dish, *Bhajia*, is served as the first course in British restaurants featuring Indian food. Similarly, Chadha's film combines cultures.

Bhaji centers on three generations of women from different backgrounds, who go for a day trip to the resort of Blackpool. While the women have different values, they are caring and supportive of each other. It also explores the relationships between races.

"I had heard some family stories dealing with the reaction to bi-racial relationships. For the young people this was no problem, but the older generation had difficulty accepting the [idea]. I also explored the attitudes of the older women whose traditional ways conflicted with the more open and modern mores of the day. The women represented in the film cover a broad spectrum of age, background and interests. However, they all connect despite their differences," she said.

The filmmaker's next work will explore the lives of her parents' generation. "I'm aware that for them the problems were different than for those who were born in England or came at an early age," said Chadha.

Shanghai festival

Last year, my husband, Sam, and I helped program the first Shanghai International Film Festival, sponsored by the Shanghai Municipal People's Government and organized by a committee headed by Liu Zhenyuan. Films from the United States, Europe, South America, Canada, Australia, Asia and Africa were shown.

We had high expectations of our first trip to China, and they were realized. We were greeted with great warmth and generosity. Others attending included Marsha Kinder, Diane Baker, Deborah Raffin, Susan Strasberg, Amy Irving and Janet Yang.

Several works by women were in the program. Here's a sampling.

From Russia came Inessa Seleznyova's *Cultivating Cruelty in Women and Dogs*, a wonderful film reflecting the unsettling condition of Russia's new society.

Liu Miomiao, who graduated from the Beijing Film Academy and works with XiaoXiang Film Studio, showed *Innocent Babbling*, a coming-of-age story set in a village in Northwest China. Shi Shuijun, a graduate from the Central Drama Academy, screened *The Casualty*, produced by the Shanghai Film Studio. The film explores the social and moral questions involved when a medical student dies as a result of medical incompetence. *Divorce*, directed by Wang Haowei, a graduate of the Beijing Film Academy, is the story of the social ills of the '30s in Beijing.

Huang Shu Quin, also from the Beijing Film Academy, presented *Human, Demon, Woman*, exploring a woman's life in the arts from a psychological point of view.

How To Be A Woman and Not Die in the Attempt, directed by American Ana Belen, is the story of a journalist who is overwhelmed with working, raising a family and being a dutiful and loving wife. In *My Daughter Is Mine*, by German director Vivian Naele, a woman attempts to get her daughter back after her ex-husband abducts the girl and takes her to Greece. *Aya*, directed by Solrun Hosas, explores conflicts and cultural misunderstandings between a Japanese woman her Australian husband. Swiss director Danielle Giuliana presented *Blue Hour*, about the price of succeeding in the television industry. In Canadian Elisabeta Bostan's *Reach for the Sky*, a young gymnast dreams of being a champion.

Other films included Lina Wertmuller's *Saturday, Sunday and Monday*, a family drama; Beeban Kidron's *Used People*; Sally Potter's *Orlando* and Liv Ullman's *Sofie*.

Dialogue

Continued from page 3

for distribution. The more satellite dishes we put up, the more people will see this work. Well [technology] can't be everything. I imagine thousands of households with one person looking at something, which is what they are already doing. To me, I like the old model of dragging the projector around to different church basements where you know there is going to be some discussion.

—J.K.

We try to promote local screenings so you're not just looking at the TV at home alone but rather more collectively. It doesn't have to propel you out the window into a protest, but if it can change some little thing in the way you think about an issue, that's great. —C.L.

For more information: Deep Dish TV Network, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012. 212/473-8933.

For more information: Women in the Director's Chair, 3425 N. Sheffield Ave., Suite 201, Chicago, IL 60657, 312/281-4988.

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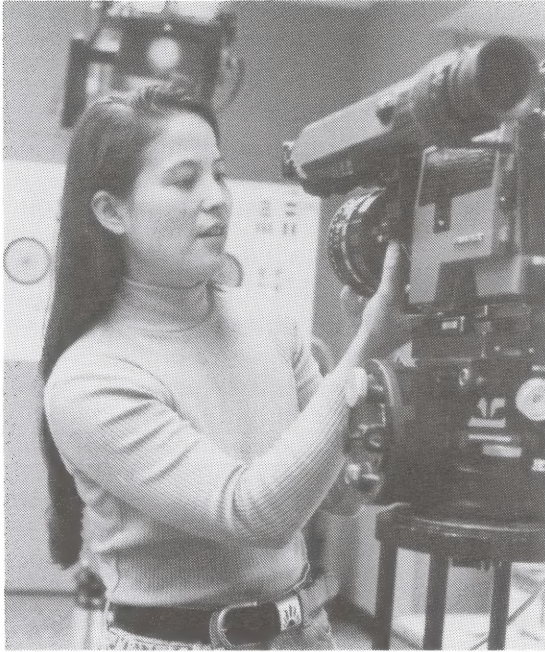
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A sharper image

BY ALEXIS KRASILOVSKY

"To live a visual life is an enormous undertaking. I have only touched it."

—Dorothea Lange, photographer

In 1913, Katherine Russell Bleeker, one of the first professional camerawomen, began documenting prison conditions at Sing Sing. Her work contributed to prison reform. Bleeker challenged the conventional thinking of the time: It takes a man to operate a moving picture camera.

It's amazing how long that idea prevailed. The refrain "What the hell is a woman doing in camera?" is still heard. With more and more skilled women working in technical areas, attitudes are changing, but not fast enough, say women in the profession.

According to a 1991 report published in *Daily Variety*, the number of camerawomen in the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 659, (the Photographers' Guild — the Hollywood union involved in shooting American union features and television programs), has more than tripled over the preceding 10 years to approximately 334. But at 11.5% women are still only a fraction of the total membership. But there is no measure of the thousands of other qualified camerawomen working in other parts of the country or on non-union projects.

In Hollywood, camerawomen were rarities well into the 1970s when women began to join IATSE. By 1983, the numbers of camerawomen had grown, but they were isolated and found little support in the film community. Patricia Hill, a camerawoman in Los Angeles, who was interested in finding other women to share her experiences with, searched the union roster for names that sounded female, and invited the women to a potluck dinner at the home of first camera assistant Leslie Hill. The idea was to meet and discuss common concerns. That was the beginning of the L.A.-based organization, Behind the Lens: An Association of Professional Camerawomen.

"I really enjoyed the opportunity to feel that I wasn't the only woman crazy enough to want to do this for a living," said Jo Carson, a special effects camera operator.

The issues of the day were sexual discrimination and harassment, unemployment, conflicts between family and career, safety issues, age discrimination, and moral dilem-

Camerawomen Kelly Uchimura (above left) and Heather Mackenzie. Photos by Linda Marczak

mas concerning the values represented in many films and commercials. Confidence building and sharing experiences were an important benefit of being in the group.

“Whenever I found another technical woman, it was a cause for celebration, to be able to talk over the problems, fears and successes we had in common. It was exciting to find out what makes these other women tick, what makes them get into camera work and what makes them put up with all the heartache and underemployment,” said camera operator Liz Bailey.

Creating job opportunities for camera women was the first priority. The organization specifically wanted to get jobs for women filming the Olympics in L.A. that year.

By 1987, BTL had grown to about 150 members. It was active in providing all-women crews to Women in Film and NOW and in supporting such issues as day care at studios, and stuntwoman Julie Ann Johnson’s \$1 million sex discrimination case.

“I think that women who are coming into it now are lucky because BTL has existed so long, and there’s this huge network of women to connect with if they want to put out the effort,” said Carson.

Under Carson’s leadership, BTL was successful in helping the union get a training program for women off the ground. It also offered a mentor program to apprentices.

With more women working in camera positions, BTL now concentrates on jobs, career advancement and networking. It offers a wide range of seminars on technical concerns such as helicopter mounts, camera and lighting equipment, lab procedures, special effects techniques, film exposures, filters and transfers. It also features guest speakers and screens work by members regularly. BTL works with Women in Film, Cinewomen, The American Society of Cinematographers and other groups to help strengthen the position of women in the industry.

Equal employment opportunities, a dialogue regarding women’s visual aesthetics, an archive depicting the achievements of camerawomen, sexual harassment and child care are ongoing issues.

Networking and sharing experiences are important for women who are trying to work their way through camera departments. In the following *Angles* interviews, three camerawomen talk about their experiences.

Alexis Krasilovsky has directed and produced many films, videos and holograms since graduating from Yale University’s first co-ed class in 1971. Her film, What Memphis Needs, toured nationally with the Ann Arbor Film Festival and aired on PBS. She is an associate professor at California State University, Northridge, where she teaches film production and screenwriting. She is the author of Some Women Writers Kill Themselves and The New Cinematographers: Women Behind the Lens.

Behind the Lens: An Association of Professional Camerawomen began in 1984. Members include professionals active in LATSE locals 659, 644 and 666. The organization promotes the employment of women, provides technical and professional support and works to improve the image of women on and off the screen. For more information: Behind the Lens, PO Box 868, Santa Monica, CA 90406.

Kelly Elder McGowen

BY ALEXIS KRASILOVSKY

“Just about every woman first or second assistant I speak with wants to move up to camera operator and then director of photography.”

Camerawoman Kelly Elder McGowen has worked on feature films such as *Dirty Dancing* and *The Big Picture*. In addition she has assisted in several television movies, music videos and commercials. She is the president of *Behind the Lens: An Association of Professional Camerawomen*. McGowen is a member of the *International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (LATSE) Local 659*. Between jobs, she is putting together her *Director of Photography* reel. She recently completed a half-hour dramatic short film by Owen Renfro. Her latest music video, shot in South Central Los Angeles, deals with the issue of survival of the children in that community.

Alexis Krasilovsky: Could you describe how you became interested in camera work and your early education?

Kelly Elder McGowen: My introduction to photography started when I was about eight or nine years old. My mother owned a Brownie camera. I used to take pictures of my friends in the back yard and put them into books along with captions. Also, my sister has been partially sighted since birth. I suppose on an unconscious level, I was profoundly affected by her birth. That’s where part of my visual strength comes from in living with someone who can’t see.

I went to Stephens College, a small women’s college in Columbia, Missouri, where I could study still photography and learn about television and film producing as well as get a liberal arts degree.

My first semester I took a film theory class. We studied *Citizen Kane*. By the end of the first reel, I had caught the moving picture bug. Stephens had a small radio/TV station that had cable access and two sound stages. By the time I’d finished my freshman year, I’d already been involved in a bunch of projects and had interned at the radio station. I was beginning to get a feel for what I wanted to do.

Stephens has an exchange program with the BBC. I went to Oxford for one semester my senior year. I took scriptwriting, learned about the history of the BBC, and observed a lot of BBC productions, including the shooting of *King Lear* for PBS.

AK: Once you had your degree how did you get into camera work?

KM: I went to Miami because my older sister lived there. It was a really tough market to break into. I felt that I had good credentials. I had directed and shot several projects at school, and I had a reel. I was not expecting to

McGowen

walk into an above the line job. I just figured that at the very least I could get into some sort of entry-level position. I ended up having to waitress to support myself.

I received a phone call from one of my professors at Stephens, saying that a man had called the college who owned an industrial film company in Charlotte, N.C. He was looking for a woman trainee. This was like a dream come true, because they shot 16mm films, they had their own studio, and they were one of the top industrial film producers in the country, working with Fortune 500 companies. They produced about 20 films a year.

I flew up for the interview and got the job that day. That's where I got the majority of my early hands-on training. At that time, I was the first female to work her way through the ranks to staff director/camerawoman. I started as a trainee in post-production, learning how to sync dailies, how to transfer the quarter-inch tape for editing and how to conform original film, including hot splicing. I put together the final audio mixes that went to the lab. Eventually, they worked me into production. I did everything from runner-gofer to pushing dolly, putting up lights to running sound to booming.

AK: How did you make the change to L.A.?

KM: I was [in North Carolina] three years. In the beginning, they gave me simple projects to shoot, such as the exterior of a building. They trained me little by little, and I learned how to shoot by trial and error. It was necessary at that company to do several different jobs—such as directing or editing. Two or three months would go by without any shooting, and I wanted to concentrate on shooting. While I do appreciate a good industrial film, I decided to leave because I wanted to be part of the experience of the big screen.

My mother probably is my biggest supporter and my biggest backer. She and I drove out to California from St. Louis with my car loaded down.

I came to L.A. without any job leads and pounded the pavement. I used the *Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety* for leads. When the trade magazines like *American Cinematographer* came to the company in North Carolina, I would look at them, and see 35mm Panavision and Arriflex cameras. Although we had plenty of 16mm cameras, I had no idea about 35mm. It was important for me to push myself and see how far I could go. I wanted to learn about these cameras and meet professionals.

I started out looking for production assistant jobs because I hadn't worked on a feature film, and I wanted to learn from the ground floor. I also wanted to learn other areas of filmmaking, see what was out there. People kept telling me I was overqualified. They thought I would be bored. Finally, on my tenth interview, I convinced Nancy Israel to give me a job as a runner in the production office. I worked with her on three features. On the third feature, part of my job was to project dailies.

I had never projected dailies before. It's really nerve-racking. The crew comes in tired from a long day. The last thing they want is someone who takes forever loading and reloading the projector. Jeff Jur was the director of

Michelle Crenshaw

BY ELFRIEDA ABBE

"I was interested in camera—anything technical that had to do with lights, film, camera movement, telling a story that way."

Michelle Crenshaw has worked on both independent and studio features in Chicago, moved to Los Angeles a few years ago to get more experience working on feature films. Once a still photographer, she switched careers after taking a film course at Columbia College in Chicago. In the late '80s, when production was booming in Chicago and there was a shortage of loaders and second assistants, Crenshaw was accepted into an International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees training program. She continues her membership in the Chicago local and is working toward union membership in L.A.

photography on that show. He came back and laughed at me frantically changing the reels. He had just moved here from Chicago, so he didn't have regular camera assistants in L.A. Through the course of the movie, I told Jeff about my interest in camera work, and he said, "Send me your resume, and I'll see what I can do." Lo and behold, a couple weeks later, he ended up getting an After-School Special shooting in 16mm, and his first assistant agreed to give me a chance. I've ended up working for Jeff Jur a lot, most notably on *Dirty Dancing* and *The Big Picture*. He's given me a lot of opportunities. His demeanor is wonderful. He's very supportive of his crew. It's important for me to learn from somebody that I respect as a person, as well as for their photographic talent.

AK: Describe some of the jobs in a camera department.

KM: You start as a camera trainee or loader, then second assistant camera, first assistant camera, camera operator and director of photography. The second AC loads the film, does the slate and the paper work for the camera department and basically maintains the equipment during the show. During a shoot, the second AC lays down the marks for the actors.

The primary job of the first AC [also called focus puller] is to put the image in focus, set the T-stops on the lens and thread the camera with the proper film stock. The first AC also helps maintain the equipment and checks it out before a shoot to be sure everything is there and working.

The camera operator runs the camera and works directly with the director of photography in planning all the shots for the picture. The director of photography works with the director to translate the screenplay into moving images. They spend a lot of pre-production time discuss-

In addition to working on features such as *Uncle Buck*, *The Untouchables*, *Home Alone* and *Dennis the Menace*, *Crenshaw* produced and directed her own work, *Skin Deep*, a moving account of her experiences as a young black girl confronting racism. The film was shown at *Women in the Director's Chair International Film and Video Festival in Chicago*. She worked on *Christine Choy's Who Killed Vincent Chin* and the PBS series *Eyes on the Prize Part II*. She was first camera assistant on *Harpo Productions' There Are No Children Here* and *When We Were Colored*.

Elfrieda Abbe: How did your career develop?

Michelle Crenshaw: When I was 21, I left my hometown Detroit to come to Chicago. I went to a [commercial art school] to study large format photography. I was disappointed in the program. Someone told me about Columbia College. It has a huge photo department as well as film and video. When I found out they had a film department it was like a light bulb just went off in my head. I ended up going there part-time and then being a full-time film student, knowing when I enrolled that I was interested in camera – anything technical that had to do with lights, film, camera movement, telling a story that way. I grew up in the arts so I do have some artistic background, but I feel using a camera to interpret a story is where I'm best suited.



Michelle Crenshaw

Photo By
DEAN M. SIMMON

ing style, angles, lighting, plot motivation. The director, DP and production designer discuss the size and placement of the sets and the colors that will be used to determine lighting and angles. Ideally, the day the shoot begins, the director will have a story board and along with the DP will have put together a shot list so everyone knows what is going to happen.

AK: What's your work like on a day to day basis?

KM: It's very competitive and interesting with lots of long hours and physical labor. It takes up 99.9% of your life. You have to want it, to be committed. I get calls at 1 a.m. with someone asking me to be on the set at 5 a.m. It's sporadic because you're an independent contractor.

AK: What work are you most proud of?

KM: I was the DP on a film in New York directed by Owen Renfroe, *But Before I Do*. It's a 20-minute dramatic short about a woman three days away from getting married who decides to go visit her first love. We shot it in 10 days. I had a wonderful time. It was the most fulfilling experience in my career because I was able to combine the artistic and technical sides of myself.

AK: Have you experienced any resistance because you are a woman?

KM: Some women have stories of resistance, where they really and truly were discriminated against, losing work to less qualified technicians. The resistance for me has probably been more subtle. Luckily, there have been female assistants before me who paved the way.

My first 35mm show was shot in Northern California. I was really excited. By the time we got up there, the crew was tired, bickering and fighting. One night, as I came bounding around the corner, I saw a good portion of grip and electric standing there, talking about the new crew. I

heard them say, "What the hell is a woman doing in camera."

Attitudes aren't going to change overnight. But there always have been women on movie sets. Usually one of the actors is female, the script person is female, more often than not one of the producers is female, and generally, the hair/makeup and wardrobe departments are female. The departments that interact more closely to the camera department have fewer females. But it's very common now to see second assistants who are women. Just about every woman AC that I speak with wants to move up to operator and then to DP.

The game changes when you decide to make a personal move upward. I've felt more resistance and alienation since I've been shooting music videos and short films, such as Owen Renfroe's. I won't look back, because this move is for me and no one else.

The fact that I can employ myself in Hollywood is a satisfaction to me. I know the cameras, and I've had hands-on experience. It's important for me to achieve my goals for myself, but it's also important for me to achieve my goals for my parents. Both of my parents are working professionals. For as long as I can remember, my Dad said, "You're going to college, and you're going to have a career. All I ask is that you pick a career that when you get up in the morning you are happy to be going to work." It's important to pursue your own dreams.

Crenshaw

After leaving Columbia College, I worked for a while as an audio-video technician in a hospital. I used to videotape surgeries, do a lot of slide work and some still work for the medical profession. The union was opening up at the time. That was in 1985 and '86, when production was starting to grow in Chicago and they needed loaders and second assistants. I left [the hospital] and started training in the union as a camera assistant and went up the ranks. I was a loader. From a loader I became a second assistant and from a second assistant I moved up to a first.

EA: Was the union just opening up to women?

MC: They were starting to be aware of maybe having minorities, but not necessarily women. When I joined, there was really only one working female union member that I know of. I'm just speaking for Chicago. From what I know, Maggie Fox was the most visible female who was consistently working.

EA: Describe your experiences in the industry.

MC: First of all, for the people who are part of pre- or post-production, it's a job. It's a business and people make a living and have families based on this. It's a competitive job, it's not just based on skills, but who you know as well as what you know. I think that sometimes leaves people with a lot of insecurity. They're only going to give you so much information to work on, for you as an individual to build your skills. That's why this is one of the few industries that has so much nepotism because it is about gaining knowledge through doing. There's only so much you can learn through school. Then you have to actually get out there and do the job. Well, how do you get to the point where you can do the job and feel comfortable. It's a lot of politicking, a lot of finding the right social or political camp you can be in that will allow you the opportunity to do your job and make a decent living.

EA: How do you put yourself forward?

MC: Through professional organizations, school and putting yourself out there and finding out who is who. By not being too aggressive, but being persistent enough so if you call someone one month and don't hear from that person, you call again two months down the road. Just don't make one phone call and expect this person is all of a sudden going to be accountable.

EA: In your case wasn't the timing important?

MC: Yes, the timing was good. There was a shortage of people. I was doing non-union work. I would use my sick days and days off and do non-union commercials. But even though the timing was right then, the film industry is driven by supply and demand, so times do change. Right now Chicago is slow. You have to prepare so when the time does arrive, you are able to contribute. I had services they needed that I was able to provide because I knew things before hand. I managed to move quickly, but I also knew a lot. I surprised some people about how much I knew.

EA: How do you learn, if you're in a situation where people won't share information?

Estelle F. Kirsh

BY ALEXIS KRASILOVSKY

"To do a job right, you need tools, knowledge, attitude, cooperation. My abilities at framing a shot, at composition, at working well with actors, at lighting, knowing how to use equipment have nothing to do with my gender."

Estelle F. Kirsh, a long-time independent filmmaker and cinematographer, was one of the few women accepted in the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 659's Camera Assistant Program in 1978. Out of more than 1,500 applicants and 75 interviewees, Kirsh tied for first place. After successfully completing the program, she joined the union, working as an assistant primarily on network television shows, and moving up to camera operator. She worked on many television sitcoms, commercials and film and television documentaries.

MC: I did a lot of projects at school. I was constantly active. I worked in the film cage. I was 21 when I went back, and I knew exactly what I wanted to do. There was no floundering. I didn't want to direct or write or act. I wasn't trying to find where my space was within the industry. I knew I wanted to do camera. I went there specifically learning everything I could technically that had to do with the camera.

EA: Why did you move to Los Angeles, and what was it like when you first got there?

MC: Things were going well for me in Chicago. I had moved up to first assistant and was turning down a lot of second assistant jobs. But I had to spend time in L.A. and get it out of my system. I was at a point where I was moving up in my career. There will be a lot more challenges for me here, especially as I move up in the ranks of the camera department. My ultimate goal is developing and working on features.

Basically, I took one step backwards. But I knew a lot of people here because some first assistants from L.A. had worked in Chicago. I also knew what to do. I can make phone calls on my own and send out my resume. You just go out and network. The film community is small enough that you'll meet people. I'm really on my own. I do know other assistants and camera operators I talk to, but it's a business, based on competition — even though you might have allies. But if you are both camera assistants applying for the same job, how much support can you expect to get?

EA: What are some of the differences between working in Chicago and L.A.?

In 1987, Kirsh was working as an independent contractor/still photographer. An accident on the set left her with traumatic brain injury, resulting in permanent physical disabilities, including nerve damage that makes daily activities, such as typing, doing the dishes or holding a cup difficult and painful.

Kirsh was permanently disabled and unable to continue her career in camera work. Because of medical, legal and financial complications, she hasn't received the medical care she needs.

But her spirit is undaunted. One of the founders of Behind the Lens, An Association of Professional Camerawomen, she is an advocate for women working in film and video and continues to be outspoken and courageous. In a recent telephone conversation, Kirsh reflected that one of her most meaningful jobs was working as camera operator in 1984 on an educational documentary about AIDS, For Our Lives.

The following are excerpts from a longer interview included in *The New Cinematographers, Women Behind the Camera*. The interviews were done in 1989 and 1990. I continue to be in contact with Kirsh, who lives in New York City.



Estelle Kirsh

Photo By
Kathleen O'Reilly

AK: How did you first become interested in camerawork?

EK: I saw Bergman's *Wild Strawberries* shot by Gunnar Fischer. Seeing this film was a transcendental experience. *Wild Strawberries* is one of the most brilliantly photographed films ever made. They say that Bergman's film was shot diametrically opposed to the Hollywood method. I then became a film freak, working on film magazines, picked up a camera — and started shooting. My first public screening was at the New York Filmmakers' Cinematheque the summer of '67.

AK: Describe your experience in the Camera Assistant Training Program.

EK: My experience ran from replacing the first assistant on one show to being the designated coffee-server on too many others. Too often there was an unwillingness to share knowledge, a reluctance to divulge the great secrets, so to speak, of cinematography, as if it were a religious cult with chosen acolytes.

By the second week of the program, I realized there was a radical difference both from what was expected, and

MC: Chicago is a smaller community and it's very union. People don't have as much choice. Now that I'm living in L.A., there's a lot of non-union work. There's a lot of work period. The major difference is money when you have the major studios, which are under union contract. But there are some very good non-union shows that do happen. As far as money goes you can make a very good living working non-union, you just don't have pension, health and welfare benefits.

Also it's a bigger territory and there's more variety of jobs. I've worked on two features. They are both non-union low budget features. I've worked on *Out of Sync*, *White Man's Burden*, and music videos. I never clicked with the commercial industry. I'm pretty much a documentary, feature person. That's my network. I've been working on documentaries for the BBC. Until I get into the union, I have to search around and get the best non-union stuff I can get, and network with camera operators and DPs, who do decent non-union work.

EA: Other than pay scale what are some of the union benefits?

MC: While you're working you accumulate a certain amount of funds based on dollar amounts per hour. Even though I've been out of the [Chicago] area for a year, I was covered [with health insurance] because I had accumulated that fund. Now my coverage funds are dry. I drained them so I have to pay into it if I'm going to stay with their health plan. I'm still a union member there. I still pay quarterly dues. If a job comes along that takes me from L.A. to Chicago, I'm qualified to work.

EA: What has helped you get where you are?

MC: Being somewhat nurturing and supportive, honest, reliable and responsible. If I can't do a job or there's a piece of equipment I'm not familiar with, I say I'm not familiar with it. I don't try to fudge my way through. If you don't have backup, you can't fudge your way through. I've seen it happen. For a woman or any minority, that's the worse thing you can do for yourself.

I've done all the freebies I can do. I put out my time. I hung around, I did this, I schlepped that. You can go to the rental houses and get familiar with the equipment there. Have someone show you what parts are. Ask questions.

Success depends on training, experience, tenacity, the willingness to stick things out if you really want to do what you claim you want to do. It takes time and an understanding of what the role of the camera department is. It's not glamorous, at least initially. It's a lot of hard physical work and, depending on where you are, it's also draining as far as concentration goes, especially when you become a first assistant. That takes a lot of organization.

EA: Have you experienced racism or sexism?

MC: I'm aware it exists. All I have to do is be strong and secure within myself and keep moving forward. I've been blocked for various reasons. Sometimes I think it's more of an issue of being a woman than my color. The color comes in because I stick out. There are people who work with me because they appreciate my skills, my personality and what I have to contribute to the camera department. Then there are people who refuse to work with women, or have [other] issues. I may not work with them,

Kirsh

what I was used to. I saw with crystal clarity—deep focus—the *union* Hollywood. The political lines were clear. I, as a female, Jewish New Yorker, was out. I recognized the situation, realized I did not belong, could not belong. At that point, I intended to leave the program—as others had done. I was dissuaded by an appeal to my feminist politics, and my conscience.

AK: Was there more discrimination against camerawomen than in other fields?

EK: [There was] competition for a limited number of union jobs. Too many people conjecture that a few restricted positions are assigned to, or relegated for, women. Unfortunately both men and women believe this hypothesis. The camera is not gender sensitive. Hell, don't give me a job because I'm a woman. Don't deny me a job because I'm a woman.

Here's a minor incident indicative of attitude. The camera department head at a major studio was hiring me for a new season. And after first highly praising my work and attitude, he asked the first assistant, "Would you mind working with a woman?"

AK: How was it different in L.A. in terms of support, compared to New York, where you started as an independent?

EK: In New York, I made films alone and worked on regular crews—narrative documentary, commercials. Of course there was sexism—but there was also a vibrant independent film world, parallel to the political movement of the '60s.

L.A. was culture shock. There were production people and crews who honestly didn't know camerawomen existed! Funny, when people spotted a tool pouch on my belt, they assumed it was a walkie-talkie and I was the as-

sistant director. It was inconceivable to many that I could be a camera assistant.

Actors, writers, etc.—came up to me to chat, shake my hand—some out of curiosity, including many women who had been in other departments for a long time, to share in my being there.

AK: How did you handle the situation?

EK: I never saw myself as a curiosity. I saw myself as a cinematographer. The fact of my gender was as relevant as having blue eyes, not brown; wearing a blue belt one day, not a black belt. My gender had no relevance—to me.

AK: How did you deal with the issue of strength, and how others perceive your ability to carry heavy equipment on the set or location?

EK: How ironic that not having equivalent strength to professional football players is used against women, even though it is hardly the critical factor in getting the shot right. Women have injured themselves being intimidated into physical acts no man would ever have done alone. It's OK for a man to say something is too heavy, and immediately get help and assistance; it's teamwork. Yet let a woman try this and she'll be insulted and ridiculed, perceived as the prototypical wimp.

This issue of all women's strength, as well as the issue of all men's strength, should not be relevant except to a specific job.

AK: Do you think your political work with *Behind the Lens* decreased the number of jobs you were offered?

EK: I don't know. Fact is, of course, I was the first woman assistant promoted to camera operator by a director of photography. I played by the written rules, paid my dues, and moved up.

AK: How does one handle stress as a camerawoman?

Crenshaw

but frankly I don't want to work with people who have those attitudes. The only reason minorities are working is that stories are changing. More blacks above the line are noticing all-white crews and starting to make comments.

It's a very closed specialized field. I want to be hired on my skills. Since I've been in L.A., I've met more blacks working in camera, electric or grip, who are actually doing things.

I'm developing my skills, that's the bottom line. I'm here to grow and develop my skills, not be hung up on whether this person is going to hire me because I'm a woman or I'm a black woman. I'm doing what I need to do for myself.

EA: What changes would you like to see?

MC: The only way there will be changes is when you strip down a lot of sexist, racist attitudes. I wish women were more supportive of other women. That [can be] a problem. Some women carry a lot of the same sexist

attitudes that men dish out. They don't even like themselves as women, and they play to that around men. I wish women would be more supportive of women and African Americans would be more supportive of African Americans and play mentoring and teaching roles in bringing others up. That's the only way any of us are going to survive. I think that's true in almost everything. We're going to have to nurture and take care of one another.

Summit for women

The Women in Film International Summit in Los Angeles, February 19-22, included delegates from all over the world, representing many phases of filmmaking. The purpose was to educate and enlighten women in all areas of filmmaking. It was open to members and non-members of WIF.

The Summit included screenings of works by women and a number of panel discussions with topics ranging from *Filmmaking in a Global Environment* and *Below the Line Opportunities to Co-Productions*. Hands-on workshops were offered to explore interactive technology and the information super highway. Universal Studios designed a behind-the-scenes tour for the delegates. For more information about this or future events: Women in Film, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Suite 530, Hollywood, CA 90028. 213/960-1011. —Terra Abrams

EK: Eighteen-hour work days require stamina, intense concentration. To do a job right, you need tools, knowledge, attitude, cooperation. My abilities at framing a shot, at composition, at working well with actors, at lighting, knowing how to use equipment — my proficiency at all the technical, artistic, craft skills — have nothing to do with my gender, my race, my religion, my politics.

Let me emphasize that the cooperative crews, especially in New York, were made of disparate elements — in terms of gender/race/religion/background. It didn't matter — and these crews worked together, made a whole. Like good cooking, like a good meal. Shooting was an enlightening, liberating, orgasmic experience — again the physical exhilaration of hand-holding — euphoria, a dance with the camera. Any place with a camera in my hand, I was alive.

AK: Can you talk about some of the cameras and camera situations that you worked with?

EK: I worked with diverse situations — 16mm, 35mm, tape, single camera, multi-camera, documentary, commercials, newsreel, Hollywood, using a variety of cameras.

Curious how some DPs swear by the lighting, others swear by certain cameras...a little interjection of superstition? Or bonding with equipment — comparable to the thrill of driving a certain car to the max, or using any machinery...the natural high.

AK: How about some thoughts relating to Hollywood to the outside world?

EK: [There's] a poster in the Disabled Students Center at Ventura College [Ventura, Calif.] that says, "Sight is only one of our senses — but seeing is an art." I wonder about camera crews, people who can detect a quarter-stop light change, but cannot see past the stereotypes and generalizations and prejudices they've been taught. How curious [that] people working in the movie industry, whatever field — can see underneath all the make-believe, know all the methods, every technical trick, skill, effect, creating illusion on the screen, yet they still believe all the stereotypes of gender and race, religion and class. To see, yet to be blind to reality, and art — not seeing past political/cultural illusions.

AK: Has the industry changed in its perception of camerawomen in the last several years?

EK: More than a decade later, there is more acceptance. Dozens more women — and men, for that matter — in the union. Camera women are no longer oddities, rarities, curiosities. Unfortunately, closer analysis reveals too many women at the bottom, or moving to other fields. It is the vanguard of progress. The second wave of feminism in the 20th century has not achieved true integration of the genders.

How many female directors of photography are there in the union? How many are working? How many in the American Society of Cinematographers as full members? And when camerawomen do leave for positions with power, what are they producing? Are they making films that improve the image of women?

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

**International Film & Video Festival
March 9-12 Chicago, Illinois**

**Chicago Filmmakers
1543 W. Division St.**

**Randolph Street Gallery
756 N. Milwaukee Ave.**

**The Film Center
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Columbus Dr. and Jackson Blvd.**

**The Center for Community and Media
1440 N. Dayton St.**

**For more information: Women in the Director's Chair,
3435 N. Sheffield. Ave., Chicago, IL 60657.
312/281-4988**

ANGLES Display Advertising Rates

ANGLES is a magazine devoted to bringing readers news and information of women working in film and video at all levels of production. Our subscribers include filmmakers, video artists, technicians, cinematographers, programmers, distributors, libraries, university film departments and media arts organizations. If you would like to reach this audience, consider the following:

Full page:	\$350
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Make checks payable to *Angles*. For more information: Elfrieda Abbe, *Angles*, P.O. Box 11916, Milwaukee, WI 53211. 414/963-8951.

people

Zelnabu Irene Davis, Chicago, received a \$10,000 research and development grant for her film *Compensation* from the National Black Programming Consortium. She also received an NEA Media Production Grant and an AFI Grant for the film, which should be finished in the spring. Davis's *Mother of the River*, a PBS presentation, is in post-production. The film is being edited by **Cyndi Moran**. *Mother of the River* is the story of a young black slave girl who encounters and befriends a magical woman in the woods. Davis and Rose Troche (*Go Fish*) were among several Chicago independent filmmakers featured in the Chicago Tribune entertainment section.

Christine Choy is the new chairwoman of the Graduate Film Department at New York University's Tisch School of Arts. Choy, who was one of the first Asian filmmakers to document issues concerning Asian immigrant lives, hopes to train students as filmmakers and as human beings. Choy has completed 48 films, including the Oscar-nominated *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* She wants to make students not only aware of making films as entertainment for commercial gain, but also as a way of dealing with important issues.

Amy Harrison, New York, just produced a short for Comedy Central and co-directed a six-minute video tribute to Gloria Steinem on the occasion of her 60th birthday for the Ms. Foundation. She is working on a screenplay about a teenage tomboy who comes of age within a feminist vigilante group. She is also producing a series of narrative stories by women filmmakers.

Audrey Hope's Reel Women series, dedicated to creating positive female role models in the media, premiered on National Access Television in August. The opening program featured media experts who analyzed and critiqued the way women are portrayed in movies, the news and on television. Panelists included **Julie Carmen**, actress; **Ella Taylor**, writer and film critic; **Elizabeth**

Daley, USC School of Cinema & TV; **Caillie Khouri**, Academy Award-winning screenwriter; **Terry McMillan**, author; and **Betty Friedan**, founder of NOW. For more information: Reel Women, 513 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 336, Santa Monica, CA 90404. 213/850-8588.

Barbara Kopple received the AFI's Maya Deren Award for independent film and video artists. The award was named in honor of one of America's most revered avant-garde filmmakers to recognize the enormous contribution independents have made to American culture. Among Kopple's works are the Academy Award-winning documentaries, *Harlan County, U.S.A.* and *American Dream*. Video maker **Julie Zando** also received the award. Her work explores difficult subjects—female masochism, erotic obsession and victimization. Her works include *Let's Play Prisoners* and *The A Ha! Experience*.

Margo Starr attended the 5th International Symposium of Electronic Art, where she showed her video *DIG* in the Media Lounge at Helsinki, Finland and at the Theatre Society House in St. Petersburg, Russia. The video was recently purchased by the National Gallery of Art and will be part of an exhibit, *New Light: The Electronic Image*, a series of video art programs. Her video car *Diana of Baltimore* was commissioned by the Mayor's Committee of Art and Culture for exhibition in the Baltimore festival, Artscape '94. *Diana of Baltimore* is a converted Renault Alliance, covered with silver and glitter and installed with video and audio playback for audiences on the street. The video exhibited in the car was digitally processed footage of the workings of a Baltimore dump, intercut with digital footage of woods in the Adirondacks and a woman jazz drummer. For more information: Margo Starr, 2901 Boston St., #501, Baltimore, MD 21224.

Eve Luckring's multi-media installation, *she can't take a joke*, focusing on sexual harassment, was shown at Highways in Santa Monica. The work incorporates video footage from the Clarence Thomas hearings. For more information: Eve Luckring, 571-1/2 S. Arizona Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90022. 213/267-1557.

Karen Murphy, who produced *This is Spinal Tap*, *Drugstore Cowboy* and *Twenty Bucks*, and **Christina Rodgers**, vice president of production at Todd-AO/TAE Productions, were among the panelists discussing the production of independent features at Worldfest-Houston.

Rule of Thumb by **Jill Petzall** won the Hometown USA first prize in the category of Best Social Service Documentary Public Access Broadcast. The video concerns the legal rights of abused women. The title refers to the fact that just a generation ago, it was legal for a man to beat his wife, provided he did not use a stick any thicker than his thumb. Now the "rule of thumb" is that all abuse is against the law. The program tries to inspire as it informs women how to access new laws which challenge the traditional cycles of violence. The work was sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, St. Louis Section. The executive producer is State Representative **Ilene Ordower**. Petzall is an independent video producer/writer and video artist specializing in cultural and social issue documentaries.

Rule of Thumb is intended for audiences ranging from women's shelters to social service professionals to legal agencies to police departments. It emphasizes that domestic violence can no longer be treated as a private family affair—in- stead it must be understood as a criminal affair. For more information: Jill Petzall, Beacon Productions Inc., 39 N. Bemiston, St. Louis, MO 63105. 314/725-1196.

Canadian **Mina Shum** received a special jury citation for her first feature *Double Happiness* at the Toronto International Film Festival. **Darnell Martin's** *I Like It Like That* premiered at the festival.

Harriett Skye, has been awarded a Media Fellowship at New York University's Center for Media, Culture and History. The fellowships, which are made in conjunction with the United Nations Environmental Film Festival, are awarded to media makers whose work explores the impact of environmental issues on the cultural and political concerns of indigenous communities. Skye is the

Public Affairs and Scholarship Coordinator for the Association on American Indian Affairs. Her first documentary *The Right To Be* has been screened at numerous international film festivals, including the Sundance Film Festival. It uses personal narrative to explore the effects and impact of environmental and cultural destruction on the lives of Standing Rock Sioux, as well as their current positive efforts to claim their past and future.

New CINE Advisory Board Members are **Allison Dollar**, managing editor for *In Motion Magazine*; **Susan Fertig-Dyke**, who produced and directed several award-winning documentaries for PBS; **Gertie Loretta Hurley**, acquisitions officer/audiovisual information specialist for the National Archives Multimedia Publications and Distribution Division; and **Jeannette Paulson**, director of the Hawaii International Film Festival and founding director of the Palm Springs Film Festival.

New Independent Television Service board members include: **Claire Aguilar**, manager of KCET TV/Los Angeles and former programmer for the UCLA Film and Television Archive; **Joan Braderman**, whose videos include *No More Nice Girls* and *Joan Does Dynasty*; **Kate Horsfield**, executive director of the Video Data Bank at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; and **Judy Richardson**, who contributed to the *Eyes on the Prize* series as an advisor and researcher.

The Austin Heart of Film Festival featured writers in its fall event. Among those attending were **Janet Roach** (*Prizzi's Honor*) and **Linda Woolverton** (*The Lion King*, *Beauty and the Beast*).

Several works by students or alumni of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts were chosen for the Sundance Film Festival. They include: *The Salesman and Other Adventures*, by **Hannah Weyer**, *Jump* by **Melissa Painter**, *Developing* by **Marya Cohn**, and *The Incredibly True Adventure of Two Girls in Love* by **Maria Maggenti**.

The following won awards at the Ann Arbor Film Festival. **Karaba**, **Lea Beatriz Zagury**, Newhall, Calif., Best Animation; *If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now*, **Marina**

McDougall, San Francisco, Honorable Mention; **Annie, Christine Ferriter**, Los Angeles, Most Promising Filmmaker; **Siren, Roslyn Broder**, Chicago, Isabella Liddell Art Award; **Bywandering Fields, Susanne Cockrell**, Berkeley, Calif., Honorable Mention; **Los Muertitos, Isabel Herguera**, Valencia, Calif., Most Technically Innovative Award.

The following received Rosebud Awards in Washington D.C.: **Sa-I-Gu, Dal Sil Kim-Gibson, Christine Choy** and **Elaine H. Kim**, and **Hog, Lynn Dougherty** and **Richard Roughton**. The films were shown at Filmfest DC with the filmmakers in attendance. Rosebud is an organization that fosters innovative, experimental, unusual and deeply personal filmmaking through annual competitions and showcases.

The Film Arts Foundation Grants awarded grants to Northern California filmmakers in three categories: For personal works (\$3,000) — **Eva Ilona Brzeski, Jennifer Frame, Kristin Maria Ingimarsdottir, Sarah Jacobson, Maria Luisa Mendonca, Sara Whiteley, Martha Gorzycki** and **Michele Zaccheo**; Development (\$1,000) — **Ellen Bruno, Joyce Lee**; Completion/distribution (\$1,000 to \$4,000) — **Jane Wagner**.

Top awards at the New England Film & Video Festival went to **Ellen Spiro**, Northhampton, Mass., *Greetings From Out Here*, celebrating alternative lifestyles and gay sub-culture within the deep South; **Margaret Lazarus, Renner Wunderlich** and **Stacey Kabat**, Cambridge, Mass., *Defending Our Lives*, the tragic ordeals of women imprisoned for killing abusive partners; **Amy Wilson**, Dorchester, Mass., *Casitor Oil Can Do That*, a video connecting chain-smoking, commercial television and castor oil with childbirth. The Outstanding Super 8 Award went to *Onion Skin Blue*, by **Ellen Piskorski** and **Marin Marinelli**, Boston, about a young woman's dangerous indulgences. The Videosmith Outstanding Student Video Award went to *Leaving Bakul Bagan* by **Sandeep Ray**, Hampshire College, focusing on a young Indian woman preparing to leave her family for study in the U.S. on the eve of political turmoil.

Other awards include: Imagery Award to *Papa Qu(h)erido* by **Maria Guadalupe Rivarol**, Hampshire College. Judge's Special Merit Awards to *And*

You From Yours by Lynn Robinson, Ledyard, Conn.; *Love Knots* by **Allison Humenuk**, a former Harvard student; and *The Kitchen Blues* by **Charlene Gilbert**, Dorchester. Animation Award to *Sleepless Nights* by **Nneka Bennett**, Rhode Island School of Design. Director's Honorable Mention Award to *The Third Day* by **Wendy Woodson**, Amherst.

Intermedia Arts Minnesota announced the following interdisciplinary grants: \$2,000 to **Jen Benka, Jane Kramer** and **Stephanie Kulke**, Milwaukee, Wis.; \$4,000 to **Portia Cobb**, Milwaukee; \$2,000 to **Kristin Froebel, Ali Heshmati, Mary Luddington** and **Jennifer Yoos**, Minneapolis, Minn.; \$4,950 to **Karen MeKyung Muckenhirn**, Minneapolis; \$2,000 to **Michael F. Murray** and **Kristin Pluhacek**, Omaha, Neb.; \$1,550 to **Barbara Nei** and **Valerie Jenkins**, Minneapolis, and **Suzanne Kosmalski**, St. Paul; \$4,000 to **Juliana Pegues** and **Kathy Haddad**, Minneapolis; \$3,000 to **Linda Louise Rother, Jean McQuillan** and **Diann Parrot**, Minneapolis; \$4,000 to **Deborah Stein**, Minneapolis; \$5,000 to **Nan Toskey** and **Billy Yount**, Minneapolis; \$2,000 to **Jane Beatrice Wegscheider** and **Steve Heter**, Alta Vista, Kansas; \$2,000 to **Linda Whitney**, Devils Lake, North Dakota.

The Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium awarded grants to the following productions: *Angel de Cora*, producer **Anna Romero** (Winnebago) Washington, D.C., about Angle De Cora, an American Indian woman artist in the late 1890s, and *Dancing in the Wind: Wild Rice Harvesting on the White Earth Reservation*, produced by **Mary John** (Dakota) and **Deb Wallwork**, Fargo, N. Dak., about the traditional wild rice harvesting.

Angles editor and film writer, **Elfrieda Abbe**, received a grant from Money for Women/Barbara Deming Memorial Fund Inc. to support her work on a book of interviews with women directors.

in progress

The Women's Global Film Project is a five-part series in development for the national PBS schedule. **Janna Hearn Bhimani** is the associate producer on the project. The series will profile the struggles and triumphs of women making a difference politically, socially and economically to the

state of the world. It will illustrate the common ground upon which women struggle and the common goals toward which women strive. The series will address international affairs, health, population, the environment, economic development and religion. The project is targeted to air in the Winter/Spring of 1996. It received its first production grant of \$350,000 from The John T. and Catherine D. MacArthur foundation.

For more information: Janna Hearn Bhimani, WGFP, Maryland Public Television, 11767 Owings Mills Blvd, Owings Mills, MD 21117-1499. 410/356-5600. Fax: 410/581-4338.

Sheryl D. Miller is working on *Jerusalem, Yerushalayim, Al-Quds*, which will examine the Israeli, Palestinian, international and American perspectives on Jerusalem in the context of the peace agreement. The film will explore creative proposals for the future. For more information: Sheryl D. Miller, 160 West End Ave., Suite 12N, New York, NY 10023. 212/496-0573. Fax: 212/721-4749.

Films in production: *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar*, directed by **Beeban Kidron**, shooting in New York and Nebraska; *Billy Madison*, directed by **Tamra Davis**, shooting in Toronto; *A Day in the Life*, directed by **Betty Bridges-Nacasio**, shooting in Los Angeles; *In the Nations*, directed by **Mary Feuer**, shooting in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts; *Let It Be Me*, directed by **Eleanor Bergstein**, shooting in New York; *Little Big Mall*, directed by **Anna Nicholas**, shooting in Los Angeles County; *Naked Acts*, directed by **Brigett Davis**, shooting in New York; *Slack Trek: The X Generation*, directed by **Julie Chang**, shooting in Boston; *Strange Days*, directed by **Kathryn Bigelow**, shooting in Los Angeles; *The Woman in the Moon*, directed by **Ariadne E. Kimberly**, shooting in Tucson, Arizona.

In pre-production: *Boys*, directed by **Stacy Cochran**, shooting in Baltimore. In preparation: *I Was a Teenage Teenager*, directed by **Amy Heckerling**, L.A.; *Late Bloomers*, directed by **Julia Dyer**, shooting in Dallas; *The Big Green*, directed by **Holly Goldberg-Sloan**; , shooting in Austin, Texas; *How to Make an American Quilt*, directed by **Jocelyn Moorhouse**; *Three Wishes*, directed by **Martha Coolidge**; *Untitled* Jodie Foster

Project, directed by **Jodie Foster**.

In development: *Michael*, directed by **Nora Ephron**; *Mitigating Circumstances*, directed by **Agnieszka Holland**; *The Survival Instinct*, directed by **Celeste A. Frazier**, shooting in Chicago.

International: *Kristin Lavransdatter*, directed by **Liv Ullmann**, Norway, shooting in Norway; *The Film About Em*, directed by **Ella Lemhagen**, Sweden, shooting in Stockholm; *The Lion Bride*, directed by **Margareta Vinterheden**, Sweden, shooting in Sweden and Finland.

in distribution

Baseball Girls, directed by **Lois Siegel** and produced by **Silva Basmajian**, explores the private and professional lives of women obsessed with a sport they love. Using animation, archival stills and live action footage, this feature documentary details the history of women's participation in the largely male world of baseball and softball. For more information: Rose Magone/NFB Publicist, 150 John St, Toronto, Ontario M5V 3C3. 416/973-9094. Fax: 416/973-4735.

Barbara Bader's Beautiful Little Piggies was part of a miniseries, *Women's Voices*, on PBS. In the half-hour video Bader exposes her lifelong preoccupation with feeling fat, and how that often overpowering sensation affects relationships with her father, husband, mother and food. It weaves archival photos and family films with illuminating vignettes and interviews to create a compelling and often amusing vision of the survival of a compulsive overeater, and the trials of family members who live with her.

The video won several awards including the Bronze Apple at the 1994 National Educational Film & Video Festival. **Ruth Roland** of Roland House provided the on-line editing services. **Jenny Rohrer** of Rohrer Film & Video provided the off-line facility.

For more information: Filmmakers Library, 212/808-4980.

Book of Shadows, a video ballet by **Janis Mattox**, explores an archetypal encounter with the goddess — maiden, mother, crone, virgin and seductress, nurturer and destroyer. Using sound and light, *Book of Shadows* propels the

human form into the landscape of dream and myth. Dancers Marci Javril and Riccardo Morrison are featured. The video has received several awards including, Best Experimental Film & Video Art at Worldfest Houston, Best Music Video at the Philadelphia International Film Festival, the Cine Golden Eagle, and Best Experimental at the East Bay Video Festival.

For more information: Good Sound Foundation, 2995 Woodside Rd., #400, Woodside, CA 94062. 415/851-2177. Fax: 415/851-2183.

Dorothea Lange: A Visual Life, **Meg Partridge**, brings to life five decades of American photographs with insights by the master photographer herself. The film sets Lange's evocative photographs and recorded conversations against contemporary interviews of her family and friends.

For more information: Pacific Pictures, 1400 Valley Ford Freestone Rd., Valley Ford, CA 94972-0305. 707/876-3135. Fax: 707/876-9807.

Healthy Babies, a Spanish and English language video, promotes prenatal care for the Latino Community. It was made with a March of Dimes Grant in conjunction with the Long Beach Latino Advisory Committee, which was formed to study the problem of the lack of prenatal care for Latinos.

The project was produced and directed by **Cheryl Quintana Leader** with a multi-cultural women's team. **Teresa Medina Amoros** was director of photography; **Veda Campbell**, sound mixer; **Germaine Franco**, composer; and **Mina Vasquez**, casting. For more information: City of Long Beach, Telecommunications Bureau, Department of Library Services, 3311 E. Willow St., Long Beach, CA 90806. 310/442-3630.

The Misogynist, by **Venturis Lee**, is a two-hour film about domestic violence. For more information: P&P Public Relations, PO Box 574, Lake Forest, CA 92630. 714/587-5137.

A Question of Survival, by **Ann Filemyr** in collaboration with **Dena Aronson**, is a visual journey and video diary on the global environmental crisis. The grassroots documentary explores the impact of our current development patterns on social and cultural breakdown and human survival. Includes interviews with Brazilian environmental journalists who elaborate on the connection between the pressures of the global economy on ecological problems.

For more information: Dena Aronson, 414/265-8118.

Appalshop Film & Video announces the following releases: *Ready for Harvest: Clearcutting in the Southern Appalachians*, directed by **Anne Lewis Johnson**, explores the questions of how we use and protect our native forests. *Homemade Tales: Songs and Sayings of Florida Stone*, by **Angelyn DeBord** and **Anthony Sloan**, documents Florida Sloan, a singer and storyteller who lives in Knott County, in Eastern Kentucky. Because of a childhood illness, the doctor told Florida's mother she would never be able to speak. Her mother kept her out of school to help with the family crops. These early years of isolation, cut off from spoken communication with even the closest members of her family, prompted Florida to develop a keen sense of observation. Later, she was able to speak, and she celebrated this accomplishment by creating stories and songs about everything around her. For more information: Appalshop Film & Video, 306 Madison St., Whitesburg, KY 41858. 606/633-0108. 606/633-1009.

Direct Cinema has released a trilogy by **Donna Read** concerning women and spirituality. The following are included:

The Burning Times explores the witch craze that swept through Europe only a few hundred years ago, offering insights into the legends and misconceptions that surround the word witch. *Goddess Remembered* presents evidence of an early egalitarian civilization based primarily on human cooperation. These goddess-worshipping peoples lived for thousands of years in almost complete freedom from war or territorial conflicts. Features discussions with scholars such as Merlin Stone, Jean Bolen and Charlene Spretnak.

Full Circle features authors, social activists, teachers and feminists challenging patriarchal boundaries and encourages reverence for the earth, while exploring women's spirituality in the last decade of the 20th century.

For more information: Direct Cinema Limited, P.O. Box 10003, Santa Monica, CA 90403-9003. 800/525-0000. Fax: 310/396-3233.

Fanlight Productions has several new releases. *Something Should Be Done About Grandma Ruthie*, **Cary Stauffacher**, is a personal portrait of her family's struggle to care for a relative with Alzheimer's disease. *Key*

Changes: A Portrait of Lisa Thorson, by **Cindy Marshall**, profiles a successful jazz singer who uses a wheelchair. *Other Families*, by **Dorothy Chvatal**, examines life inside families headed by lesbian mothers through the eyes of their adult children. For more information: Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130. 617/524-0980. Fax: 617/524-8838.

Her Own Words distributes videos about the lives of women. Titles include: *American Fever*, which tells the story of a 19th century Norwegian emigrant preparing to cross the Atlantic to America; *Mountain Wolf Woman: 1884-1960*, the life of an American Indian told in her own words; *Patchwork: A Kaleidoscope of Quilts*, explores traditional quilting; *Her Own Words: Pioneer Women's Diaries*, brings to life the words of Midwestern pioneer women.

For more information: Her Own Words, PO Box 5264, Madison, WI. 53705. 608-271-7083.

New from NEWIST is *Children of Divorce*, which looks at divorce through the eyes of youths. The children urge parents, "Tell us about the divorce. Affirm our feelings. Reassure us of your love. don't use us as pawns or spies." For more information: NEWIST, 1110 IS Bldg., University of Wisconsin - Green Bay, Green Bay, WI 54311. 414/465-2999.

Third World Newsreel's 25th Anniversary Catalogue is available. Third World currently distributes more than 200 films and videos from African, Asian, Latin American, Palestinian and Native American diasporas. The collection includes works by **Julie Dash**, **Camille Billops**, **Shu Lea Cheang** and **Tania Cypriano**.

Third World is offering several collections including: *3rd Wave: Works by Young Asian and Black British Makers*; *Voices from Asian America*; *Girlz Nite: Black Lesbians on the Edge*; *The African Diaspora: Intifada*; *Making It Work*, videos on health and family; and *Native Voices*.

For more information: Third World Newsreel, 355 W. 38th St., 5th Floor, New York, NY 10018. 212/947-9277. Fax: 212/594-6417.

Women Make Movies has released a package of films *Global Feminism: On the Road to Beijing*, featuring international women's issues. Films include: *Warrior Marks*, **Alice Walker** and **Pratibha Parmar**, about female genital mutilation; *The Vienna Tribunal*, **Gerry Rog-**

ers, highlighting the 1993 U.N. World Human Rights Conference in Vienna and providing a context for discussion of women's rights; *It's Up to Us*, **Bea Milwe**, a discussion of women in the developing world and forward-looking strategies for international feminism; *The F Word*, **Marclia Jarmel** and **Erin Gallagher**, a provocative look at feminism today, including interviews with women and men from diverse backgrounds; *Pregnant With Dreams*, **Julia Barco**, intimate fast-moving video documenting feminism in Latin America; *Pain, Passion and Profit*, **Gurinder Chadha**, an inspirational look at women entrepreneurs through the eyes of Anita Roddick, the founder of the Body Shop; *Women in Politics*, **Lowri Gwilym**, a series about women politicians including Benazir Bhutto, Corazon Aquino, Tatyana Zaslvskaaya, Simone Veil and Gudrun Agnarsdottir.

Jane Campion's short films, *Passionless Moments*, *A Girl's Own Story* and *After Hours* are also available.

For more information: Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, Suite 500, New York, NY 10013. 212/925-0606. Fax: 212/925-2052.

deadlines

U.S. International Film and Video Festival. Deadline: March 1. The world's largest competition honoring sponsored business, television and industry productions. Eligible entries are any non-theatrical 16mm film or 3/4" or 1/2" video. Festival will be June 1-2. For more information: U.S. International Film & Video, 841 N. Addison Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126-1291. 708/834-7773. Fax: 708/834-5565.

1996 Women's Caucus for Art. Deadline: March 1. National conference announces call for panel sessions, papers, performances, workshops, presentations from women in arts fields. Propose an event as a topic with participant suggestions or as a topic only. Working artists send two descriptive paragraphs and a resume with samples. Art historians and others send a one-page proposal and resume. Include SASE for all material. All moderators must be WCA members and participants should be also. For more information: Kathryn Hargreaves, WCA Conference Program Co-chair. 135 Center Hill Rd., Plymouth, MA 02360.

Jewish Video Competition.

Deadline: March 17. Seeks independent video production and interactive media on Jewish themes. New categories include interactive media, video from the 1970s and World War II remembrances. For more information: Bill Chayes, Video Competition Coordinator, Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2911 Russell St., Berkeley, CA 94705. 510/549-6952.

Slice of Life Film & Video Showcase. Deadline April 1. Seeks observational documentary films and videos, including those using experimental techniques. Preview format: 16mm and 1/2". Festival will be Nov. 14-16. For more information: Slice of Life, Sedgwick Heskett, Documentary Resource Center, 106 Boalsburg Pike, Box 909, Lemont PA 16851. 814/234-1945.

Midwest Media Arts Access Center Grant: Deadline April 1. Women are invited to submit proposals, either for new film projects, or for completion of film projects in progress. Recipients will receive up to \$1,500 work of MMAAC equipment and facilities rental. For more information: MMAAC, Women Filmmakers Access Grant, 2388 University Ave., St. Paul, MN 44114. 612/644-1912.

National Education Media Market. Deadline: April 13. The only market in the U.S. dedicated to nontheatrical and educational film, video and multimedia programs. Seeks films, videos, interactive media. Works-in-progress, series, previously distributed works and foreign language programs. Market will be May 25-27. For more information: National Educational Media Market, 655 13th St., Oakland CA 94612-1220. 510/465-6885. Fax: 510/465-2835.

Money for Women/Barbara Deming Memorial Fund. Deadline June 30. Offers small grants, usually under \$1,000, to individual feminists active in the arts whose work speaks for peace and social justice. For more information: Money for Women, P.O. Box 40-1043, Brooklyn, NY 11240-1043.

CINE Golden Eagle Film and Video Competition. Deadline: August 1. Seeks works in these categories: animation, arts, business and industry, children's, documentary, economic development & agriculture, education, entertainment, environment, history, medicine, motivational, news, people, public affairs, public health, science and technology, sports, travel and tourism, amateur & pre-professional. For more information:

CINE, 1001 Connecticut, Ave., N.W. Suite 638, Washington, DC 20036. 202/785-1136. Fax: 202/785-4114.

festivals

Big Muddy Film Festival, February 25-March 5, Carbondale, Ill. A showcase of independently produced films and videos. For more information: Big Muddy Film Festival, Department of Cinema & Photography, Mailcode 6610, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale, IL 62901-6610. 618/453-1482. Fax: 618/453-1005.

Santa Barbara International Film Festival, March 3-12. For more information: Santa Barbara Film Festival, 1216 State St., #710, Santa Barbara, CA 93101. 805/963-0023. Fax: 805/962-2524.

Women in the Director's Chair, March 9-12, Chicago. For more information: Women in the Director's Chair, 3435 N. Sheffield Ave., Chicago, IL 60657. 312/281-4988.

South by Southwest Film & Media Conference and Film Festival, March 10-18, Austin, Texas. For more information: Nancy Schafer, SXSW Film Festival, P.O. Box 4999, Austin, TX 78765. 512/467-7979. 512/451-0754.

Ann Arbor Film Festival, March 14-19, Ann Arbor, Mich. For more information: Ann Arbor Film Festival, P.O. Box 8232, Ann Arbor, MI 48107. 313/995-5356. Fax: 313/995-5396.

Humboldt International Film Festival, March 7-11, Arcata, Calif. For more information: Humboldt International Film Festival, Theatre Arts Department, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521. 707/826-4113. Fax: 707/826-5494.

New Directors/New Films, March 17-April 2, New York. For more information: New Directors/New Films, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., 4th Floor, New York, NY 10023-6595. 212/875-5628. Fax: 212/875-5636.

New York Underground Film & Video Festival, March 23-26. For more information: NY Underground Film and Video Festival, 225 Lafayette St., Suite 605, New York, NY 10012. 212/925-3440.

Cleveland International Film Festival, March 30-April 9. For more information: Cleve-

land International Film Festival, 1621 Euclid Ave., #428, Cleveland, OH 44115. 216/623-0103.

Videoscape: Asian American Video Showcase, April, New York. For more information: Asian CineVision, 32 E. Broadway, New York, NY 10002. 212/925-8685. Fax: 212/925-8157.

Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, April, Oakland, Calif. For more information: Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, 405 14th St., Suite 515, Oakland, CA 94612.

Madrid Experimental Cinema Week, April 4-11. For more information: Victor de la Sema, 31/30D 28016 Madrid Spain. 31/1-458-7348. Fax: 31/2-458-7223.

International Wildlife Film Festival, April 8-15. For more information: International Wildlife Film Festival, 802 E. Front St., Missoula, MT 59802. 406/728-9380. Fax: 406/728-2881.

Women of Color Film & Video Festival Tribute, April 17-21, Oakland, Calif. For more information: Of Visible Distinction Productions, P.O. Box 10001, Oakland, CA 94610-0001. 510/654-3450.

Human Rights Watch Film Festival, May, New York. For more information: Brunn Burres, Programmer, Human Rights Watch Film Festival, 485 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017-6104. 212/972-8400. Fax: 212/972-0905.

New England Film and Video Festival, May 11-13, Boston, Mass. For more information: NEVF, Arts Extension Service, Division of Continuing Education, 602 Goodell Building, University of Mass., Amherst, MA 01003-3260. 413/545-2360.

Charlotte Film & Video Festival, May 4-14, Charlotte, NC. For more information: Robert West, Mint Museum, 2730 Randolph Rd., Charlotte, NC 28207. 704/337-2019. Fax: 704/337-2101.

Athens International Film & Video Festival, May 5-12, Athens, Ohio. For more information: The Athens Center for Film and Video, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701. 614/593-1330. Fax: 614/593-1328.

Annecy International Animated Film Festival, May 30-June 4, Annecy, France. For more information: Festival International du Film d'Animation, 2 Blvd. du Lycée, BP 399, 74013 Annecy, France. 33/50-57-41-72. Fax: 33/50-67-81-95.

Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival, May 31-June 4.

For more information: Toronto Worldwide Short Film Festival, 258 Wallace Ave., Box #142, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6P3M9. 416/533-2053. Fax: 416/532-3132.

Atlanta Film & Video Festival, June, Atlanta, Ga. For more information: IMAGE Film and Video Center, 75 Bennett St., NW, Suite M-1, Atlanta GA 30309. 404/352-4225. Fax: 404/352-0657.

New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, June, New York. For more information: NY Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, 462 Broadway, Suite 510, New York, NY 10013. 212/343-2707. Fax: 212/343-0629.

Melbourne International Film Festival, June 8-24. For more information: Melbourne International Film Festival, P.O. Box 2206, Filzroy Mail Center, Filzroy 3065, Victoria, Australia. 61/3-417-2011. Fax: 61/3-417-3804.

Banff Television Festival, June 18-24. For more information: Banff TV Festival, P.O. 1020, Banff, Alberta, Canada TOL OCO. 403/762-3060. 403/762-5357.

San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival, June 8-18. For more information: Frameline, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103. 415/703-8650.

opportunities

American Cinematheque. Seeking short films to screen as part of monthly film series at the Directors Guild. For more information: Programming Manager, American Cinematheque, 1717 Highland, Suite 814, Hollywood, CA 90028.

Artists Fellowships Inc. Funds artists experiencing serious illness or crisis or bereavement. For more information: Artists Fellowship Inc., Emergency Aid, c/o Salmagundi Club, 47th 5th Ave, New York, NY 10003.

Artists' Television Access. Seeks videos under 28 minutes for a weekly cable show in San Francisco. Submit 3/4", S-VHS or VHS tapes. For more information: ATA, 992 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110. 415/824-3890.

Black Entertainment Television. Seeks films and TV projects by black independent filmmakers or producers. For more information: Black Entertainment Television, 1899 9th

St., NE, Washington, DC 20018. 202/636-2400.

Change Inc. Assists artists of all disciplines with emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from \$100 to \$500. Send a letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resume, announcements of exhibitions, work samples and at least two letters of recommendation from field. For more information: Change Inc., P.O. Box 705, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276. 212/473-3742.

The Coalition vs. PBS Censorship. Seeks high-quality documentaries for its "Banned by PBS Film Festival." Must have been rejected for national PBS feed. Send VHS tapes for viewing with description of the program and reason for PBS rejection, length, formats available, and filmmaker and distributor information. For more information: Coalition vs. PBS Censorship, P.O. Box 291555, Hollywood, CA 90029. 310/288-6693.

Concerns, a publication of the Women's Caucus for Modern Languages, announces a call for papers for a special issue on feminist involvement in the development of film studies as an academic discipline. Some of the questions raised are: What has the feminist contribution been to the discipline? How have women influenced research and teaching interests? What is the status of women in the profession? For more information: Harriet Margolis, Theatre and Film, Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand. 00/64-4-471-5359. Fax: 00/64-4-495-5090. email: Harriet.Margolis@vuc.ac.nz

The E-Team. Seeks films and videos for children's TV show with environmental themes. For more information: David Calderwood, Euro-Pacific Productions. 908/530-4451.

Fanlight Productions. Seeks new works on health care, mental health, disabilities, sexuality and related issues. For more information: Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130. 800/937-4113.

First Frames. A weekly half-hour series showcases international short films and videos. Pays \$100/min. Send VHS only with return mailer, artists' bio and production information. For more information: First Frames, The Production Center, School of Communication,

SDSU, San Diego, CA 92182-4561. 619/594-4786.

Home Girl Productions. Seeks home movie footage by amateur and professional women filmmakers in compiling "Scenes for Our Personal Daily Lives," a film project that shows lesbians in their real lives, celebrating the diversity of the community, both the outrageous and the mundane. For more information: HGP, 662 N. Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069. 310/859-9013.

Institute of International Education. Grants for collaborative work among artists in France, Germany. All media eligible. For more information: Vanessa Palmer, Collaborative Works, Arts International, Institute of International Education, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017. 212/984-5370.

Internews. Seeking works of international interest related to environment, culture and music for broadcast on independent television stations in the former Soviet Union. For more information: Liduina Van Nes, Internews, 3220 Sacramento St., San Francisco, CA 94115. Fax: 415/931-0428.

Jerome Foundation. Funds individual film and video artists living and working in New York City. For more information: Jerome Foundation, W. 10450 First National Bank Bldg., 332 Minnesota St., St. Paul, MN 55101.

Latino Collaborative and Downtown Community TV Center. Seeks new works by Latino film and videomakers for bi-monthly screenings. For more information: Euridice Arratia, Latino Collaborative, 280 Broadway, Rm. 412, New York, NY 10007. 212/732-1121.

Media Distribution Co-op. Offering a media action kit, featuring do-it-yourself publicity sources for filmmakers and others. For more information: Media Distribution Co-op, 1745 Louisiana St., Lawrence, KS 66044.

Media Network. National organization committed to the development and use of alternative media to promote social change, offers fiscal sponsorship to independent producers. For more information: Media Network, 39 W. 14th St., Suite 403, New York, NY 10011. 212/929-2663. 212/929-2732.

Native Voices. Seeking proposals for two half-hour cultural affairs programs by and for Montana Native Americans. For more information: Native

Voices Public Television Workshop, Dept. of Film & TV, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717. 406/994-6223.

The 90s Channel. Seeks progressive social and political issue documentaries. Send 3/4" tapes. The 90s Channel, 2010 14th St., #209, Boulder, CO 80302. 303/442-8445.

Offline. Seeks video works by regional and national artists for experimental show that airs weekly on access channels in New York State, Milwaukee, Wis., and San Francisco. Submissions should not exceed 20 min. For more information: Offline, c/o Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850.

Open Wide. Seeks submissions of 30 sec. to 20 min. on 16mm, VHS, Hi8 or 3/4". The concept of the 30-min. Canadian TV series is to stretch the perceptions of conventional television. For more information: CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R3B2G1. 204/788-3111. Fax: 204/788-3167.

PMS (Post-Modern Sisters). Touring exhibition looking for innovative short films by women. For more information: PMS, 728 Treat Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94110. Lisa Austin, 415/648-381 or Susanne Fairfax, 415/751-3507.

Production Group International. Seeks nonpolitical, cross-cultural, exotic-location and adventure documentaries that emphasize education and require strategic alliances with production facilities and co-producers. For more information: William Ball, senior producer, Special Projects, PGI Inc., 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 200, Arlington, VA 22201. 703/528-8484.

Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media. Seeks proposals from independent film, video and radio producers. Open to all producers of social issue media. For more information: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, No.500, New York, NY 10012. 212/529-5300.

Straight Cut. New one-hour television series showcasing international documentaries 7-57 minutes long. Seeking works. Send VHS. For more information: The Production Center, School of Communication, PSFA, SDSU, San Diego, CA 92182-4561. 619/594-4786.

Tricoastal Films. Seeks short films by women for possible broadcast. All genres accepted. Send VHS copy. For more information: L. Bernhardt,

Tricoastal Films, 3 Sheridan Square, New York, NY 10014.

Windows Media Resource. Seeks film and video listings for a Media Directory of independently produced programs for school age youth. Listings are free and should be appropriate for K-12 grades. For more information: Windows Media Resource, 323 Piper St., Healdsburg, CA 95448.

Women Make Movies. Seeks submissions of films and videos that include video and filmographies, bibliographical information and data for women of color media arts database. For more information: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th Fl., New York, NY 10013. 212/925-0606. Fax: 212/925-2052.

World African Network. 24-hour, pay cable channel, offering programming made by, for and about people of African descent, is screening films and videos for possible licensing. For more information: World African Network, 5120 Goldleaf Circle, Suite 380, Los Angeles, CA 90056. 213/229-3300. Fax: 213/229-3344. Or in NY, 212/316-6991. Fax: 212/316-6884.

Varied Directions International. Seeks films and videos on health and women's issues. For more information: Varied Directions International, 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843. 800/888-5236. Fax: 207/236-4512.

Visionary Films. Seeks short films by African-American filmmakers for possible distribution. Send VHS copy with SASE. For more information: Visionary Films, 6230 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 123, Los Angeles, CA 90048. 213/857-8151.

Visual Studies Workshop's Media Center. Accepts proposals on an ongoing basis for its Media Access Program. Artists, independent producers and non-profits are awarded access at reduced rates, production and post-production equipment for non-commercial projects. For more information: 716/442-8676.

Between two worlds

BY ME-K ANDO

When I returned to Korea in the fall of 1992, I felt a certain amount of detachment and alienation from my birthplace. It mirrored, oddly enough, my situation in the States since 1970, the year I was adopted. I half expected that once I was back in Korea, my biological connection would be reactivated, that I would be able to tap into the far reaches of my psyche and rediscover what it *really* meant to be Korean. Instead, I felt estranged, unwelcome, like the outcast I became when I was abandoned.

My video, *living in half tones*, is a metaphorical (re)construction of my developing Korean identity. Through recently captured visual imagery, simulated archival footage and text, it explores my experience of returning to Korea for the first time to search for bits and pieces from my past. It serves as the visual linguistic for the confusion, pain and struggle that such a search entails.

After making this video, I realize that part of being Korean is the struggle with disconnection as well as the surprise and joy of discovering little bits and pieces about Korea. There are tens of thousands of us Korean adoptees in the U.S. Our experiences, our search for identity, for a foundation on which to connect ourselves — all of this is a part of being Korean.

In her compelling documentary, *History and Memory: For Akiko and Takeshige*, Rea Tajiri explores and questions the forced relocation of her parents and many other Japanese Americans to internment camps after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. In it she states: “I began searching because I felt lost, ungrounded. Somewhat like a ghost that floats over terrain witnessing others living their lives and yet not having one of its own. I began searching for a history, my own history because I had known all along that the stories that I had been told were not true, that parts were left out. I could identify with the search for an ever absent image and the desire to create an image where there are so few.”

I can identify with Rea’s search. As an adopted Korean American woman, I search for a way to recreate my unknown history, to create images which make me feel more grounded, connected, that make me feel like a person. Secrecy, dishonesty and protective behavior are all ever present elements in the concept called “adoption.”

As Asian American women, we are defined by few, but very powerfully stereotypical images of Asian and Asian American women in the mainstream media. Our culture/heritage/gender is exploited and misrepresented repeatedly and yet people still hold these myths to be true. So that after Tia Carrerre does her karate chopping sequence in *Wayne’s World*, I get an onslaught of people asking me if I know karate, and in months before the arrival of *Miss Saigon*, I get told that I should go back to Saigon.

And after *Rising Sun* opens, I am told that I am ruining everyone’s lives because the Japanese are taking over the world. This narrow view of reality must be widened.

The lack of positive female images and role models in the media contributed to an escalating self-hatred in my formative years. I had a fierce hunger to find anything, any image, any indication that I was human too, that my life was worth living, that I actually existed. I got a taste of this after seeing Wayne Wang’s *Dim Sum*. I didn’t realize how starved I was for these images until I saw the *Joy Luck Club*. Despite some negative criticisms, for me it was the first time I saw Asian American women as women, not as sex objects or faithful servants. Mira Nair, Christine Choy, Renee Tajima, Janice Tanaka, Pratibha Parmar are all doing documentary and experimental work, but we need to see more films created by Asian American women. Portraying women as real people is essential.

Through exploring my identity as an adopted Korean, I hope to speak to others with similar experience and share it with others. I have never seen a film or video by/or about adopted Koreans. We don’t have a unified community. We are spread out here in Minneapolis, mostly in suburbs, adopted by affluent white families. The isolation, alienation, self-hatred and fear that are ever present in our lives is mind-boggling. Creating personal work serves as a tool for self-transformation. After completing *living in half tones*, I felt more at peace with my identity issues.

Personally, I am exploring experimental video making because narrative styles of media are ubiquitous, and I am trying to work in a genre which offers an alternative. My interests are not in entertainment, but in conveying issues that are important to me, issues that are usually not given a platform.

This is particularly relevant when talking about issues of women and women of color. So much of our reality has been constructed and defined by the white dominant culture. It is difficult and challenging to question these constructions and redefine ourselves without all the baggage of internalized sexism and racism. To do so we must continue to produce and promote independent projects. As media artists we have the opportunity to forge new paths and represent ourselves as we wish.

Me-K Ando, is an independent video maker and freelance writer based in Minneapolis. These were her comments during a panel, Women Portraying Women, at the Walker Art Museum in Minneapolis, held in conjunction with the 1994 Women in the Director’s Chair Film and Video Series. Her video, living in half tones, was included in the series and has been shown at Asian American festivals in New York and Los Angeles.

I N S I D E

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Dialogues With Madwomen

JIM BLOCK

At a very early age, I learned that things stood for other things. You can either go mad or learn about metaphor.

—ALLIE LIGHT, DIRECTOR
DIALOGUES WITH MADWOMEN

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